

REMARKS

This amendment is filed in response to the Office Action dated November 28, 2005. Claims 1-14 are pending. In the Office Action of November 28, 2005, the Examiner objected to claims 1, 10-11 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Applicants admitted prior art (AAPA). The Examiner indicated claims 2-8, 12 and 14 included allowable subject matter, but were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

By this amendment, claim 1 is amended to more particularly and distinctly claim the invention. Claim 2 is rewritten in independent form to obviate the objection to claims 2-8 and 12. The Examiner's rejection of claim 13 is traversed below.

Applicants believe the amendment does not require the payment of additional fees, but authorize the payment of any required fees via deposit account 10-0460.

Amended Claim 1 and Claims 9-11 are Patentable

The Examiner rejected claim 1 as being anticipated by Applicants admitted prior art (AAPA), namely FIG. 1. However the Examiner acknowledges that according to the present invention a backplane system "assigns each row of connections ... a relative shift that determines which slot is connected to another slot at a particular row of connections." Claim 1 is now amended to require that "each set of connection points comprises a *row of connection points* and each row of connection points is selected to connect via the plurality of traces to a slot that is a predetermined relative number of slots away from said slot." With this amendment, claim 1 is patentable over AAPA, which does not disclose a backplane system with a row of connection points, where each row of connection points is selected to connect via a plurality of traces to a slot that is a predetermined relative number of slots away from that slot. And, claims 9-11,

which depend from claim 1, are patentable for at least the reasons given for claim 1.

Claims 13-14 are Patentable

The Examiner rejected claim 13 as anticipated by AAPA, namely FIG. 1. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection on the basis that claim 13 includes certain limitations that are not included in AAPA. In particular, claim 13 requires, *inter alia*:

N-1 rows of connection points for interconnecting the N slots one to the other using the plurality of traces;

wherein each row of connection points is selected to connect a circuit pack in a slot to a slot that is a predetermined relative shift from said circuit pack.

As discussed above, AAPA fails to disclose a system where each row of connection points is selected to connect a circuit pack in a slot to a slot that is a predetermined relative shift from that circuit pack. Hence, claim 13 is patentable. And, claim 14, which depends from claim 13 is also patentable, at least for the reasons given for claim 13.

Claims 2-8 and 12 are Allowable

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication that claims 2-8 and 12 include patentable subject matter. To facilitate allowance, claim 2 is rewritten in independent format. Claims 3-8 and 12 ultimately depend from claim 8 and are now in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

All pending claims are in condition for allowance. Allowance at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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